

**MIRJANA SANADER**

O SUDJELOVANJU ŽENA U RADU  
RANE CRKVE NA PRIMJERU JEDNOG  
EPIGRAFSKOG SPOMENIKA IZ DUKLJE

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ON THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN  
IN THE WORK OF THE EARLY CHURCH,  
BASED ON ONE EPIGRAPHIC  
INSCRIPTION FROM DUKLJA



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### O SUDJELOVANJU ŽENA U RADU RANE CRKVE NA PRIMJERU JEDNOG EPIGRAFSKOG SPOMENIKA IZ DUKLJE

Danas se ženama u radu najranijeg razdoblja rane kršćanske Crkve pripisuje daleko veća uloga nego se pretpostavljalo, pa čak i veća nego li je njihova uloga u današnje vrijeme. Tako autori/ce upućuju da su one ne samo imale čvrsto mjesto u liturgiji i u svakodnevnom životu kršćanskih zajednica, nego da su pridonijele i širenju kršćanskog nauka.<sup>1</sup>

U istraživanju uloge žena u ranoj Crkvi je osim literarnih izvora pomogla i ranokršćanska arheologija jer su se sačuvali brojni natpisi, na nadgrobnim i votivnim spomenicima a na kojima su navedene i službe koje su žene za života obavljale u Crkvi. Na tim natpisima možemo tako pročitati da su u najranijim stoljećima kršćanstva određene žene djelovale kao apostolice, proročice, učiteljice teologije, voditeljice zajednice, đakonice, prezbiterice i biskupice.<sup>2</sup> Među njima se učestalo citira i jedan zavjetni natpis iz rimske provincije Prevalitanije koji spominje đakonicu Auzoniju (*CIL III 13845*).

O samom je natpisu je dosta pisano pri čemu su autori raspravljali o okolnostima njegovog nalaza, o vremenu njegovog nastanka ali i o njegovoj transkripciji.<sup>3</sup> U ovom radu ćemo se međutim posvetiti Auzonijinoj tituli đakonice zbog koje se taj natpis i pojavljuje u literaturi koja istražuje sudjelovanje žena u radu rane Crkve. Kako se ponegdje još uvijek može pročitati i teza da Auzonija nosi titulu jer joj je suprug bio đakon, pokušat ćemo uz pomoć novih istraživanja pokazati je li to uistinu tako. Tako ćemo dobiti i nova saznanja o radu žena u dokleatskoj ranokršćanskoj zajednici.

#### Dukljanski natpis

Ovaj je natpis (230 x 25,5 x 40 cm) koji danas važi kao izgubljen, po P. Sticcotiju posljednji put

<sup>1</sup> O službama žena u ranokršćanskoj Crkvi vidi bibliografije kod: Martimort 1985; Alexandre 1997; Eisen 2000; Jensen, 2003. Vidi izvore o đakonicama kod: Madigan, Osijek 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Eisen 2000.

<sup>3</sup> U posljednjem radu (nama poznatom) koji spominje ovaj natpis donesena je i opširnija bibliografija o njemu kao i problematika njegovog nalaza, vidi: Gelichi, Negrelli, Leardi, Sabbionesi, Belcari, 2012, str. 11 – 40.

### ON THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE WORK OF THE EARLY CHURCH, BASED ON ONE EPIGRAPHIC INSCRIPTION FROM DUKLJA

In recent times, women working for the Christian Church during its earliest historical period have been attributed a far greater role than previously assumed, even greater than the role they hold in the Church nowadays. Thus the authors will indicate that they not only held a firm place in the liturgy and daily life of Christian communities, but that they also contributed to the spread of the Christian doctrine.<sup>1</sup>

In researching the role of women in the early Church, early Christian archaeology has been as helpful as the written sources in providing information, since numerous inscriptions on funerary and votive monuments have been preserved, listing the services performed by women in the early Church. These inscriptions tell us how, in the first few centuries of Christianity, certain women acted as apostles, prophetesses, theology teachers, community leaders, deaconesses, presbyters and bishops.<sup>2</sup> Among them, the votive inscription from the Roman province of Praevalitana mentioning the deaconess Ausonia, is frequently cited (*CIL III 13845*). Much has been written on the inscription itself, with authors discussing the circumstances of the find, the date of its creation, and its transcription.<sup>3</sup> However, this paper will focus on Ausonia's title of deaconess, the main reason why the inscription is cited in papers exploring the participation of women in early Church work.

Since there is still a thesis on Ausonia's title being granted to her, on the account of her husband being a deacon, using finds from the latest research, we will try to determine if that was, indeed, the case. In addition, this research paper will also provide new information on the work done by women in the early Christian community of Duklja.

#### The Duklja Inscription

This inscription (230 x 25,5 x 40 cm), regarded as lost today, was last seen in 1902 according to P. Sticcoti, when it was halved and the inscription was car-

<sup>1</sup> On the ecclesiastical service of women in the early Christian Church see the bibliography of: Martimort 1985; Alexandre 1997; Eisen 2000; Jensen, 2003. On the sources on deaconesses see: Madigan, Osijek 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Eisen 2000.

<sup>3</sup> The last paper (that we know of) mentioning this inscription lists an extensive bibliography, as well as the problem of the find, see: Gelichi, Negrelli, Leardi, Sabbionesi, Belcari, 2012, pg. 11 – 40.

viđen 1902. g. kad je prepolovljen na dva dijela, pa mu je otklesan tekst, nakon čega je poslužio u gradnji neke seoske kuće.<sup>4</sup> To je razlog zbog kojeg nam je danas poznat samo po crtežu. Mjesto njegovog nalaza je ulaz na zapadnoj fasadi manjeg križolikog objekta u Dokleji (crkva C).<sup>5</sup> Datiranje ovog spomenika izazvalo je živahnu raspravu. Natpis je netom nakon otkrića datiran u 6. st. Međutim I. Stojković – Nikolajević ga 1957.g. smješta u rani Srednji vijek odnosno u 9 st. da bi ga nekoliko desetljeća kasnije datirala u 6. st.<sup>6</sup> U literaturi je uglavnom prihvaćena datacija u 6. st. ali neki misle da natpis potječe i iz 7. st dok se u bazi podataka *Epigraphische Datenbank Heidelberg (EDH)*, bez pobližeg objašnjenja, pojavljuje prijedlog datacije od 301. – 600.g.<sup>7</sup>

Kako se može vidjeti iz crteža na natpisu između dva križa (različita) stoji:



Međutim i oko transkripcije natpisa postoje nesuglasice pa ga se čitalo na različite načine. Tako ga između ostalih Sticotti čita *Ausonia diac(onissa) pro voto suo et fili[or]um suorum f(aciendum) curavit*.<sup>8</sup> U banci podataka EDCS je natpis transkribiran *Ausonia diac(onissa) (p) ro voto suae et filiarum suorum f(e)c(it)*.<sup>9</sup> U ranije spomenutoj heidelberškoj bazi podataka EDH su ga, iz nama nejasnih razloga, pročitali kao *Ausonia diac(onissa) (p)ro voto suo et filiora(!) suora(!) f(e)c(it)*.<sup>10</sup> Sigurno najkontroverznije čitanje ovog natpisa nudi A. Coşkun koji ga je pročitao *Ausonia diac(onissa) (p)ro voto suo et filior(um) suor(um) f(emina) c(larissima)*.<sup>11</sup>

### O ranokršćanskim đakonicama

Već su najranije kršćanske zajednice bile organizirane unutar sebe, kao što su i između različitih zajednica postojali kontakti, što je bilo moguće ostvariti samo djelovanjem crkvenih službenika.<sup>12</sup> Klerička se hijerarhija razvijala postupno a čini se da su u 3. st. kršćanske službe bile uglavnom

ved off, after which it served as building material for a local farmhouse.<sup>4</sup> For this reason we are only familiar with its drawing today. The location of the find was at the entrance on the west facade of a small cruciform building in Duklja (Church C).<sup>5</sup> The date of the inscription sparked a lively debate. Shortly after the discovery, the inscription was dated to the 6th century. However, in 1957 I. Stojković – Nikolajević placed it to the Early Middle Ages, roughly the 9th century, only to date it to the 6th century again, a few decades later.<sup>6</sup> The most accepted date in scientific literature is the 6th century, however some believe the inscription should be dated to the 7th century, while the database *Epigraphische Datenbank Heidelberg (EDH)*, without further explanation, suggests the date between AD 301 and 600.<sup>7</sup>

As can be observed from the drawing, the inscription is placed between two (different) crosses, and reads as follows:

However, there are contradictory views on the transcription as well, thus the inscription has been reconstructed in various ways. Sticotti reads it as *Ausonia diac(onissa) pro voto suo et fili[or]um suorum f(aciendum) curavit*.<sup>8</sup> The EDCS database transcribes it as *Ausonia diac(onissa) (p)ro voto suae et filiarum suorum f(e)c(it)*.<sup>9</sup> The aforementioned Heidelberg database EDH reads it as *Ausonia diac(onissa) (p)ro voto suo et filiora(!) suora(!) f(e)c(it)*, for unfamiliar reasons.<sup>10</sup> The most controversial transcription is offered by A. Coşkun who reconstructed it as *Ausonia diac(onissa) (p)ro voto suo et filior(um) suor(um) f(emina) c(larissima)*.<sup>11</sup>

### On Early Christian Deaconesses

The early Christian communities were already organized within themselves, as well as having church officials act as contacts between different communities.<sup>12</sup> The clerical hierarchy developed gradually, and it seems that the Christian services were mostly hierarchically structured in the 3rd century. The clergy, headed by the bishop, had taken over the leadership

4 Sticotti, 19992, str. 145 - 146, sl. 83.

5 Gelichi, Negrelli, Leardi, Sabbionesi, Belcari 2012, str. 17.

6 Stojković – Nikolajević 1957, str. 567-572; Stojković – Nikolajević 1981, str.9 -13.

7 U 7. st. Auber 1986, str. 136. Od 4. do 7 st: <http://edh-www.adw.uni-heidelberg.de/edh/inschrift/HD054540>

8 Sticotti 19992, str. 145.

9 [http://db.edcs.eu/epigr/epi\\_ergebnis\\_de.php](http://db.edcs.eu/epigr/epi_ergebnis_de.php)

10 <http://edh-www.adw.uni-heidelberg.de/edh/inschrift/HD054540>

11 Coşkun 2002, str. 167.

12 Hermann 1980.

4 Sticotti, 19992, pg. 145 - 146, pic. 83.

5 Gelichi, Negrelli, Leardi, Sabbionesi, Belcari 2012, pg. 17.

6 Stojković – Nikolajević 1957, pg. 567-572; Stojković – Nikolajević 1981, pg. 9 -13.

7 To the 7th century: Auber 1986, pg. 136. From the 4th to the 7th century: <http://edh-www.adw.uni-heidelberg.de/edh/inschrift/HD054540>

8 Sticotti 19992, pg. 145.

9 [http://db.edcs.eu/epigr/epi\\_ergebnis\\_de.php](http://db.edcs.eu/epigr/epi_ergebnis_de.php)

10 <http://edh-www.adw.uni-heidelberg.de/edh/inschrift/HD054540>

11 Coşkun 2002, pg. 167.

12 Hermann 1980.

već hijerarhijski strukturirane. Vodstvo kršćanske zajednice preuzeo je kler s biskupom na čelu a pomagali su mu prezbiteri i đakoni.<sup>13</sup> Uz ove službe postojale su i brojne neklerikalne dužnosti koje su obavljali pripadnici crkve. Krajem 2. i početkom 3. st. dolazi do uspostave prava klera na uzdržavanje zbog čega se crkvene službe polako i profesionaliziraju.<sup>14</sup>

Nije moguće niti je potrebno u okviru ovoga rada posvećenog Auzoniji prikazati razvoj ženskog đakonata, to tim više što je o službi đakonice - onoj u antici kao i onoj u suvremenoj kršćanskoj crkvi - napisan veliki broj radova.<sup>15</sup> Na ovom mjestu ćemo podsjetiti samo nekoliko važnih činjenica. Riječ *διακονία* - uz koju vežemo imena đakon i đakonica - je starogrčkog porijekla i označava službu služenja.<sup>16</sup> U ranom se kršćanstvu referira na Posljednju večeru i Kristove riječi (*Luka 22: 26-27*).<sup>17</sup> Tu su službu obavljali i muškarci i žene o čemu, između brojnih izvora, svjedoči i Novi Zavjet.<sup>18</sup> Tako Pavao u pismu Timoteju (3: 11) opisuje kojim bi se vrlinama trebale odlikovati đakonice.<sup>19</sup> A đakonica Feba koju preporučuje Pavao (*Rim. 16, 1*) sigurno je posjedovala sve te vrline, ako možemo suditi po lijepim riječima kojima on o njoj govori.<sup>20</sup> U Didaskalijama (16) posvećen je čitav odlomak službi đakonice. U tom se sirijskom crkvenom pravilniku iz 3. st. tako može pročitati da biskup treba uzeti pomoćnike...*i jednu ženu koja bi služila potrebama žena. Đakonica tako treba podučavati ženske katekumene, prije krštenja mazati njihova tijela uljem, sprovoditi ih k krsnom zdencu, zaranjati ih u vodu i na kraju oblačiti u bijele haljine. Đakonice su osim toga trebaju posjećivati bolesne, polagati na njih ruke i davati im Pričest.*<sup>21</sup> Istaknimo da je ovaj crkveni propisnik, kao uosta-

of the Christian community, and was aided by presbyters and deacons.<sup>13</sup> There were also many other non-clerical services performed by Church members. At the end of the second and the beginning of the third century, the clergy obtained the right to be financially supported and Church services were slowly getting professionalized.<sup>14</sup>

It is neither possible nor necessary to show the development of the female diaconate in this paper dedicated to Ausonia, especially since the ministry of deaconess - in antiquity as well as in recent times - has been covered in a wide range of published material.<sup>15</sup> Here we will recall a few important facts on the matter. The word *διακονία* - related to the titles deacon and deaconess - comes from Ancient Greek and signifies the duty of serving. In early Christianity it refers to the Last Supper and the words of Christ (*Luke 22: 26-27*).<sup>17</sup> This service was performed by both men and women, as testified, among elsewhere, in the New Testament.<sup>18</sup> Thus Paul in his letter to Timothy (3: 11) describes the virtues a deaconesses should possess. The deaconess Phoebe recommended by Paul (*Rim. 16, 1*) must have possessed all these virtues, judging by the complimentary words written about her. The *Didascalia Apostolorum* (16) has a whole section devoted to the ministry of deaconess. This Syrian Church Order from the 3rd century states that the bishop should take attendants and...*one woman to serve the needs of women. A deaconess should teach female catechumens, anoint them with oil before baptism, guide them to the baptismal font, submerge them in water and dress them in white robes afterwards. Deaconesses should also visit the sick, lay hands on them and give them Communion.*<sup>21</sup> Note that this Church Order, as

13 Pretpostavlja se da je već koncem 3. st. gotovo svaki veći grad antičkoga svijeta imao i biskupa. A za vladavine Justinijana (Cod. Ius. 1,3,35) je to postalo pravilo ( Chadwick 1972, str. 46 – 55).

14 O profesionalizaciji klera i ranim crkvenim službama vidi: Schöllgen 1998.

15 Vidi listu literature kod: Eisen 2000., str. 227 – 295.

16 Hentschel 2005.

17 Vi nemojte tako! Naprotiv, najveći među vama neka bude najmladi; i predstojnik kao poslužitelj. Tko je veći? Koji je za stolom ili koji posluhuje? Zar ne onaj koji je za Stolom? A ja sam posred vas kao onaj koji posluhuje. Vidi: Rebić, Fućak, Duda 2003., str. 1492.

18 U pismu Plinija Mlađeg (ep. 10,96,9-12) caru Trajanu se spominju dvije robinje koje je on, tada namjesnik u Bitiniji, stavio na muke ne bi li izvukao korisne podatke o kršćanima (... quo magis necessarium credidi ex duabus ancillis, quae ministrae dicebantur, quid esset veri, et per tormenta quaerere. Nihil aliud inveni quam superstitionem pravam et immodicam...). Nama je zanimljivo kako ih Plinije naziva ancillae ministrae što neki autori tumače da su bile đakonice (vidi: Jensen 2003, str. 143).

19 Žene neka isto tako budu ozbiljne, ne klevetnice nego trijezne, vjerne u svemu Vidi: Rebić, Fućak, Duda 2003, str. 1694.

20 Preporučujem vam Febu, sestru našu, poslužiteljicu Crkve u Kenhrej: primite je u Gospodinu kako dolikuje svetima i priskočite joj u pomoć u svemu što od vas ureba jer je i ona bila zaštitnicom mnogima i meni samome. Vidi: Rebić, Fućak, Duda 2003, str. 1660.

21 Slobodan prijevod po: Dunlop Gibson 1903, str. 78 – 79. (<http://archive.org/stream/didascaliaaposto00gibsuoft#page/78/mode/2up>)

13 It is thought that, by the end of the 3rd century, almost every larger town had a bishop. During the reign of Justinian (Cod. Ius. 1,3,35) that had become a rule ( Chadwick 1972, pg. 46 – 55).

14 On clergy professionalization and early Church services see: Schöllgen 1998.

15 See the listed bibliography at: Eisen 2000., pg. 227 – 295.

16 Hentschel 2005.

17 But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. For who is the greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? But I am among you as the one who serves. See: Rebić, Fućak, Duda 2003., pg. 1492.

18 In the letters of Pliny the Younger (ep. 10,96,9- 12) to emperor Trajan , two slave girls are mentioned, which he, as proprator of Bithynia, had tortured in order to obtain useful information about Christians (... quo magis necessarium credidi ex duabus ancillis, quae ministrae dicebantur, quid esset veri, et per tormenta quaerere. Nihil aliud inveni quam superstitionem pravam et immodicam...). For the purposes of this paper, it is interesting to note how Pliny calls them ancillae ministrae which some authors interpret as them having been deaconesses (see: Jensen 2003, pg. 143).

19 Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. See: Rebić, Fućak, Duda 2003, pg. 1694.

20 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cencreae, that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well. See: Rebić, Fućak, Duda 2003, pg. 1660.

21 Free interpretation based on: Dunlop Gibson 1903, pg. 78 – 79. (<http://archive.org/stream/didascaliaaposto00gibsuoft#page/78/mode/2up>)

lom i drugi kasniji pravilnici i upute za rad crkve a koji, između ostalog, govore i službu đakonice napisani s namjerom da poduču kako bi trebalo biti - što bi moglo upućivati na zaključak da tako nije bilo odnosno da su egzistirali različiti običaji.<sup>22</sup> O službi đakonice bilo je govora i na crkvenim saborima. Tako se o đakonicama raspravljalo već naprvo ekumenskom koncilu u Nikeji (325.g.) gdje se u tekstu 19. kanona tog koncila može vidjeti da se đakonicama nije čelo mjesto među klerom. Da se ni odluke carskih sinoda nisu potpuno prihvaćale svjedoči kanon 15. kalcedonskog ekumenskog koncila (451.g.) koji ponovno govori o njima. Tako đakonica mora biti starija od 40 godina (ranija je granica bila 60) a to može postati tek nakon podrobnog ispitivanja. Ako se nakon posvete i službovanja uda znači da je prezrela Božju milost te je treba ekskomunicirati kao i njenog partnera.<sup>23</sup> Nasuprot tome 17. kanon orleanske sinode (553.g.) pokazuje da su đakonice mogle biti udate ali se nisu za vrijeme službe smjele preudati.<sup>24</sup>

Odluke koje su se donosile na crkvenim saborima bile su različite: od podrške do zabrane rada đakonicama u crkvenim službama. U spisima crkvenih otaca one se ili uopće ne spominju ili ih se napada kao što ih se i zagovara, kako to čini npr. Sveti Ivan Zlatousti sudeći po jednoj od njegovih brojnih sačuvanih homilija (1 *Timoteju* 3:8-10). Tamo je, između ostaloga, napisao da je služba đakonice potrebna, korisna i časna za crkvu.<sup>25</sup>

Ako je suditi po jednom zanimljivom pismu Pape Gelasija I. (*Ep. 14*) napisanom na samom kraju 5. st. žene nisu lako odustajale u borbi za mjesto u crkvenim službama. U tom pismu ovaj crkveni vođa ogorčeno govori o, u to vrijeme, još uvijek uobičajenoj praksi da žene služe u liturgiji (...*ut feminae sacris altaribus ministrare firmentur...*). Činjenica da se o ženama od samih početaka razvoja crkvene hijerarhije kroz mnoga stoljeća uvijek iznova raspravljalo, (ne uvijek lijepim riječima), ukazuje na to da su žene pa tako i one u službi đakonice usprkos svim otporima bile i dalje aktivne.

Još je uvijek predmet znanstvenih rasprava pitanje jesu li đakonice pripadale kleru, kojemu su nedvojbeno pripadali đakoni.<sup>26</sup> Osim toga se čini da je služba đakonice imala drugačiji razvojni

well as later Church orders and work regulations describing the ministry of deaconess, were written with the intention of educating on the way it should be, indicating that things were different in reality, with different traditions in place.<sup>22</sup>

The ministry of deaconess was discussed during Church councils as well. The First Council of Nicaea (AD 325) denied deaconesses a place among the clergy in the text of their Nineteenth Canon Law. The decisions of imperial synods were not always accepted in their entirety, as witnessed by the fifteenth ecumenical council held at Chalcedon (AD 451), where deaconesses were discussed once more. It was established that a deaconess must be older than 40 years (prior lowest age limit was 60 years), and she must first undergo a detailed examination process. If she were to marry after the consecration and service, it would mean she had despised God's mercy, and would have to be excommunicated along with her partner.<sup>23</sup> Conversely, the Seventeenth Act of the Orleans Synod (AD 533) tells how deaconesses could marry, but were not allowed to remarry during their service.<sup>24</sup>

The decisions reached at Church Councils varied: from support to the ban of deaconess work in Church service. In the writings of Early Church Fathers they either go unmentioned or are attacked as much as advocated, as in the example of a homily by St John Chrysostom (1 *Timothy* 3:8-10). Here he writes how the ministry of deaconess is necessary, useful and honorable for the Church.<sup>25</sup>

Based on one interesting letter by Pope Gelasius I (*Ep. 14*), written at the end of the 5th century, women did not give up their place in the Church ministry so easily. The Church leader writes bitterly on the still commonplace practice of women serving in the liturgy (...*ut feminae sacris altaribus ministrare firmentur...*). The fact that women have been the repeated subject of debate (and not always in a nice manner) for many centuries, from the very outset of church hierarchy, shows that women, those in the ministry of deaconess as well, remained active in the church, despite this resistance.

Whether deaconesses belonged to the clergy or not is still a subject of scientific debate, even though deacons were undoubtedly part of it.<sup>26</sup> In addition, it appears that the ministry of deaconess had a diffe-

22 U Apostolskim konstitucijama iz 4. st. se na više mjesta spominju đakonice a sačuvana je i molitva (8,3,19) uz pomoć koje ih biskup posvećuje u tu službu. Tako se može pročitati da na nju biskup polaže ruke u prisutnosti prezbitera, đakona i đakonice nakon čega izgovara molitvu. Vidi: Boxler 1874, str. 291 (<http://www.unifr.ch/bkv/kapitel3171-1.htm>). Više antičkih izvora o đakonicama vidi kod Madigan, Osiek 2005.

23 Vidi: Jensen 2003, str. 145 -146.

24 Eisen 2000, str. 184.

25 Schaff 1889, str. 769 (<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf113.pdf>)

26 Vidi: Jensen 2003., str. 145 - 148.

22 The 4th century Apostolic Constitutions mention deaconesses many times, and have even a prayer (8,3,19) written for the occasion of their consecration to the service by the bishop. The bishop lays his hand on the deaconess in the presence of presbyters, deacons and other deaconesses, after which he recites the prayer. See: Boxler 1874, pg. 291 (<http://www.unifr.ch/bkv/kapitel3171-1.htm>). For more ancient sources on deaconesses see Madigan, Osijek 2005.

23 See: Jensen 2003, pg. 145 -146.

24 Eisen 2000, pg. 184.

25 Schaff 1889, pg. 769 (<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf113.pdf>)

26 See: Jensen 2003., pg. 145 - 148.

put na zapadu od onoga na istoku Carstva. O đakonicama u zapadnoj i istočnoj Crkvi je podrobno pisao E. Theodorou koji je pokušao odgovoriti na to pitanje istraživanjem moguće razlike između čina posvete (*cheirotonia*) i čina blagoslova (*cheirothesia*).<sup>27</sup> Tako su njegova istraživanja dovela do zanimljivih rezultata koji su potvrdili da je na istoku služba đakonice bila daleko učestalija i dugotrajnija nego na zapadu Carstva.<sup>28</sup> Đakonice su u službu ulazile uz pomoć liturgijskog čina posvete ili blagoslova koji simbolizira rukopolaganje i imaju sve glavne odlike posvete (*cheirotonia*) đakona. Po E. Theodorou služba đakonice je bila jedina ženska služba među klerom ali za razliku od đakona muškarca ona nije imala priliku za napredovanje u službi. Bile su potpuno ovisne o biskupu koji ih je i izabirao i posvećivao, a u hijerarhiji su bile ispod đakona te su se bavile uglavnom potrebama žena. E. Theodorou je i ustanovio da su na zapadu đakonice prestale djelovati u 11. st. dok su na Istoku bile prisutne do kraja Bizantskog Carstva.<sup>29</sup>

Rečeno je ranije da je sačuvano i više ranokršćanskih epigrafskih spomenika koji spominju đakonice pa nam se čini uputno iščitati podatke s tih natpisa o njihovom privatnom životu a koji bi mogao nalikovati obiteljskoj situaciji naše Auzonije.<sup>30</sup>

S područja Zapadnog Carstva su, osim dokleatskog, poznata, za sada, još dva natpisa koja spominju đakonice ali koji ništa ne govore o njihovom bračnom statusu. Tako čitamo da je votivni natpis iz Rima (6. st) dao podići Dometije, đakon i blagajnik i njegova vlastita sestra Ana đakonica, dok s nadgrobno natpisa iz Ticina podignutog za Teodoru đakonicu koja je umrla 22.07.539.g. s 48 godina nema nikakvih drugih osobnih podataka.<sup>31</sup>

S područja Istočnog Carstva potječe daleko više epigrafskih spomenika koji spominju ili samo đakonice ili se imenuju braća, sestre, druga rodbina ali i družice. Na nekim od njih se međutim može pročitati da su bile udane i da su imale djeću, što je slučaj i s dokleatskom Auzonijom. Takav je nadgrobni natpis iz Konye (*Iconium*) u rimskoj provinciji Likaoniji u Maloj Aziji. Taj je spomenik suprugu i njegovoj obitelji dala postaviti đakonica

rent path of development in the west than in the east of the Empire.

E. Theodorou has written about deaconesses in the Western and Eastern Church, and he tried to answer this question by researching the difference between the act of consecration (*cheirotonia*) and the act of blessing (*cheirothesia*).<sup>27</sup> His research has produced some interesting results which confirm that the ministry of deaconess was far more common and lasted longer in the eastern part of the Empire than in the western part.<sup>28</sup> Deaconesses entered the service by the liturgical act of consecration or blessing, symbolized by the laying on of hands, and the act had all the main characteristics of the consecration act (*cheirotonia*) of the deacons. According to E. Theodorou, the ministry of deaconess was the only female service available in the clergy, but unlike the deacons, deaconesses did not have the opportunity for advancement in Church service. They were entirely dependent on the bishop who chose and sanctified them, and they were placed beneath deacons in Church hierarchy, mostly dealing with the needs of women. E. Theodorou has also found that in the west, the deaconess ministry ceased to exist in the 11th century, while in the East it was present until the end of the Byzantine Empire.<sup>29</sup>

It has already been stated that numerous early Christian epigraphic sources exist which mention deaconesses, so it seems appropriate to analyze the information obtained from them about the private lives of deaconesses, which might somewhat resemble the family situation of Ausonia.<sup>30</sup>

Apart from the Duklja inscription, two other inscriptions mentioning deaconesses have been preserved so far from the western part of the Empire, but they hold no information on the deaconesses' marital status. The votive inscription from Rome (6th century) was dedicated by Dometius, a deacon and a treasurer, and his sister Ana, a deaconess, while the funerary inscription from Ticino, erected for Theodora, a deaconess who died on July 22, 539 at the age of 48, holds no other personal information.<sup>31</sup>

There are many more epigraphic sources from the eastern part of the Empire, mentioning either only deaconesses or also naming their brothers, sisters, other family members and even friends. Some

27 Theodorou 2008, str. 34 – 128.

28 Jensen (2003, str.147) smatra da su na istoku đakonice bile dio klera koji je znao profitirati od blizine carskog dvora u Konstantinopolu. U Justinijanovim zakonima (novelle 3, 1) se takospominje kler Svete Sofije koji se osim biskupa sastojao od 60 prezbitera, 100 muških i 40 ženskih đakona, 90 subđakona, 110 lektora i 25 psalmičara.

29 Theodorou 2008, str. 123 – 128.

30 Eisen 2000., str. 158 – 198. U ovoj je knjizi uz svaki spomenik citirana i literatura o natpisu.

31 Ibid., str. 182 – 183 i 184 – 185.

27 Theodorou 2008, pg. 34 – 128.

28 Jensen (2003, pg.147) believes that deaconesses were part of the clergy in the East, and were able to profit from being in the vicinity of the imperial court in Constantinople. The Laws of Justinian (Novella 3.1) mention the clergy of St Sophia which, apart from the bishop, consisted of 60 presbyters, 100 male and 40 female deacons, 90 sub-deacons, 110 lectors and 25 psalmists.

29 Theodorou 2008, pg. 123 – 128.

30 Eisen 2000., pg. 158 – 198. This book cites alongside each monument the bibliography related to the inscription.

31 Ibid, pg. 182 – 183 and 184 – 185.

Bazileja i maloljetni sin jedinac.<sup>32</sup> Na jednom nadgrobnom spomeniku iz Pircije u Maloj Aziji se spominje đakonica Stratega, i sin joj, koji su spomenik dali podići za Strateginog supruga, njegovu sestru i njenog sina.<sup>33</sup> Jedan drugi natpis iz Pircije govori da su đakon Eugenis i sin mu podigli spomenik za više osoba između kojih je i Eugenisova majka đakonica Matrona.<sup>34</sup> Majci đakonici Noni je dao podići spomenik prezbiter Aleksandar kako piše na natpisu iz Galatije.<sup>35</sup> Đakonu Asteriju je majka također bila đakonica kako se može pročitati na natpisu iz Lidije.<sup>36</sup>

Posebno je zanimljiv nadgrobni spomenik iz Laodike Kombuste koji je dala podići đakonica Aurelija Faustina za preminulog sina, za kojega je napisala da je bio sin Faustinov. Kako je Faustin spomenut bez ikakve funkcije ovaj spomenik je izričito svjedočanstvo da je Aurelija Faustina obavljala dužnost đakonice bez povezanosti sa službom supruga.<sup>37</sup>

### Auzonija

Možemo li iz dukljanskog natpisa iščitati još neke informacije osim podatka da se Auzonija predstavila kao đakonica? To će nam naime pomoći da barem malo osvjetlimo situaciju koja je vladala u crkvenoj zajednici ranokršćanske Dokleje u odnosu na službe žena. Dokleatska đakonica je bila dobrostojeća gospođa koja je mogla financirati podizanje jedne zavjetne građevine. A. Coşkun je ponudio čak i mogućnost da su njezini preci bili iz roda Decima Magna Auzonija.<sup>38</sup> Dokleatska je đakonica bila majka više od jednog djeteta što je dala zabilježiti na natpisu kojega je podigla u svoje i u ime svoje djece. S obzirom na norme antičkog društva u kojemu je Auzonija živjela i iz njezina statusa te činjenica da je imala djecu zaključujemo da je u jednom trenutku bila udata. A kako natpis ne spominje muža moglo bi značiti da je Auzonija u trenutku izrade natpisa bila udovica.

I u literarnim izvorima i na epigrafskim spomenicima se đakonice pojavljuju kao neudate, udate ali i udovice, pa se Auzonijina situacija uklapa u

of them mention that the deaconess in question had been married and had had children, as is the case with Ausonia from Duklja. Such an inscription comes from Konya (*Iconium*) in the Roman province of Lycania, in Asia Minor. This inscription was erected by the deaconess Basilea and her infant son, an only child, for her husband and his family.<sup>32</sup>

One funerary inscription from Pyrgium in Asia Minor mentions the deaconess Stratega and her son, on a tombstone for her husband, his sister and his sister's son.<sup>33</sup> Another inscription from Pyrgium tells us that the deacon Eugenis and his son erected a tombstone for several people, among them Eugenis' mother, deaconess Matrona.<sup>34</sup> Presbyter Alexander erected a tombstone for his mother Nona, as witnessed by an inscription from Galatia.<sup>35</sup> The mother of the deacon Asterius was also a deaconess, as stated in the inscription from Lydia.<sup>36</sup> An inscription from Laodicea Combusta erected by the deaconess Aurelia Faustina for her deceased son, mentioned as the son of Faustinus, is particularly interesting. Since Faustinus is mentioned without any additional titles to his name, this inscription is explicit testimony to the fact that Aurelia performed the service of deaconess without any connection to the service of her husband.<sup>37</sup>

### Ausonia

Can we infer any additional information from the Duklja inscription, other than Ausonia being presented as a deaconess? This would help us throw some light on the prevalent situation in the early Christian community of Duklja, in regards to the service of women.

The deaconess of Duklja was a well-off lady who could fund the construction of a votive structure. A. Coşkun even considers the possibility that her ancestors stemmed from the family of Decimus Magnus Ausonius.<sup>38</sup> She had numerous children, a fact evident from the inscription she dedicated in her and her children's names. Considering the social norms of her time, her status and the fact that she had children, we can infer that she must have been married at some point. And since the inscription mentions no husband, Ausonia might have been a widow when

32 Ibid., str. 167 – 169.

33 Ibid. str. 168.

34 Ibid. str. 169.

35 Ibid. str. 169.

36 Ibid. str. 169.

37 Ibid. str. 168 – 169.

38 A. Coşkun je istraživao Decima Magna Auzonija (Decimus Magnus Ausonius) glasovito odvijetnika, retora, gramatičara i pjesnika 4. st. iz Bordeauxa (Burdigala) i njegov klan. Ovaj je u zreloj dobi zahvaljujući milosti cara Gracijana (kojemu je u mladosti bio učitelj) postigao i sjajnu političku karijeru (i pomogao rođacima u njihovim karijerama). To je inspiriralo A. Coşkuna da transkribira završetak našeg natpisa kao f(emina) c(larissima) te se poigra mogućnošću da je i dukljanska Auzonija potekla iz tog roda. (Coşkun 2002).

32 Ibid., pg. 167 – 169.

33 Ibid, pg. 168.

34 Ibid, pg. 169.

35 Ibid, pg. 169.

36 Ibid, pg. 169.

37 Ibid, pg. 168 – 169.

38 A. Coşkun has done research on Decimus Magnus Ausonius, the famous lawyer, rhetorician, grammarian and poet from 4th century Bordeaux (Burdigala) and his family. He had an excellent political career (and helped out his cousins in their careers) in his maturity, due to the grace of Emperor Gratian (his teacher in youth). This inspired A. Coşkun to read the rest of the inscription as f(emina) c(larissima) and to consider the possibility that Ausonia from Duklja belonged to this family (Coşkun 2002).



opću sliku. Isto tako vjerujemo da je ona obnašala tu crkvenu službu sama i da nije nosila suprugovu titulu. Ponegdje se i u novijoj literaturi može naići na dvojbe oko njezine titule. Tako na primjer M. J. Auber koja, osim što Auzonijin natpis datira u 7. st., iznosi prijedlog da je ona možda žena đakona. Na takvo razmišljanje je potaknuta podatkom da uz Auzonijino ime nije napisana čitava titula nego samo *diac*.<sup>39</sup>

## Zaključak

Dukljanski je natpis o Auzoniji već desetljećima poznat, a u recentno vrijeme ga se učestalo citira i na nj referira u raspravama o ulozi žena u ranokršćanskim službama. O tim se službama iznose su različita mišljenja, kako ona koja smatraju da su žene u prvim stoljećima kršćanstva ravnopravno sudjelovale u obnašanju nekih crkvenih službi, tako i ona koja sumnjaju u sudjelovanje žena u radu Crkve. Smatramo ipak da je Auzonija u njeno vrijeme (6.st?) bila u službi dokleatske kršćanske zajednice u kojoj je obavljala dužnosti đakonice jer na takav zaključak sve upućuje, kako smo prethodno izložili.

Kako još uvijek ne možemo u potpunosti razumjeti ulogu i doprinos žena u ranokršćanskoj Crkvi jer je to još uvijek predmet važnih istraživanja, smatramo, a upravo na temelju spomenutog natpisa, da je situacija u Dokleji u odnosu na ženske crkvene službe u to vrijeme bila slična prilikama drugdje Carstvu, iako se ono sastojalo od područja koje su se ne samo zemljopisno nego kulturno, društveno, ekonomski ali i etnički potpuno razlikovali. I Auzonija iz Dokleje se - ako je postavimo u kontekst općenitog položaja žena i poslova koje su imale u ondašnjoj rimskoj religioznoj sferi - kao i neke druge žene u Rimskom Carstvu u vrijeme kada je kršćanstvo bilo na početku svog razvoja, uspjela izboriti za više slobode i prava, pa se na određeni način usprkos tradicionalnoj patrijarhalnoj nadmoći i emancipirala, ako možemo upotrijebiti taj moderni izraz za antičke prilike.

the inscription was being made.

Literary and epigraphic sources mention deaconesses as single, married or widowed, thus Ausonia's situation fits the overall picture. We also believe that she performed this Church service alone, not carrying her husband's title. Recent scientific literature shows doubts concerning her title. M. J. Auber, for example, dates the inscription to the 7th century and suggests that Ausonia might have been the wife of a deacon. She infers this from the fact that the whole title was not written down next to Ausonia's name, merely the abbreviation *diac*.<sup>39</sup>

## Conclusion

The Duklja inscription mentioning Ausonia has been well known for decades, and lately it has been cited in discussions on the role of women in early Church services. Different opinions exist on the subject matter, from those who believe that, in Church service, women were equal to men for the first few centuries of Christianity, to those who doubt women were involved in the work of the early Church at all. We believe that, in her time (6th century ?), Ausonia served as a deaconess in the early Christian community of Duklja, because, as we have previously presented, everything points to this conclusion.

Since we still cannot fully understand the role and contribution of women to the early Church, as important research on the matter is still being conducted, we believe, based on the aforementioned inscription, that the situation in Duklja concerning female Church service at the time was similar to the situation in other parts of the Empire, even though the Empire consisted of a vast multitude of different geographical, cultural, social, economic and ethnic elements. If we place Ausonia from Duklja in the context of the general position of women and their religious work at the time, we will find that she managed to establish greater freedom and better rights for herself, as did some other women of the Roman Empire during the early beginnings of Christianity, thus emancipating herself in a way, despite the traditional patriarchic dominance, if we may use this modern term for ancient times.

<sup>39</sup> Auber(1986, str. 136) piše: de savoir s'il s'agit d'une diaconesse ou d'un femme de diacre.

<sup>39</sup> Auber (1986, pg. 136) writes: de savoir s'il s'agit d'une diaconesse ou d'une femme de diacre.

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